

Carleton University

Spring/Summer 2024 Preliminary Course outline

Department of English

ENGL 3605 A: Modern and Contemporary Literary Theory

Topic: *Performances of Cultural Identity*

Prerequisites: third-year standing or permission of the department

Preclusions: ENGL 3002 (no longer offered)

Format: Online (Asynchronous)

Instructor: John Coleman

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***** This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.**

A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term. ***

Course description: This asynchronous course introduces students to production-focused literary theory with emphasis on performances and constructions of identity within the postcolonial and global literatures niches. We will study foundational theories of race, postcolonialism, cultural studies and literary production that are influenced by structuralist, deconstructive, historicist and materialist approaches. We will also analyze literary and cultural texts by diasporic and postcolonial authors. Discussions will focus on the marketing and promotion of literary works; negotiations of identity embedded within texts; and the enabling and constraining experiences of authors from minoritized backgrounds. We will have asynchronous course components including discussion forums, lecture videos, readings, assignments and educational activities.

Learning Outcomes: The purpose of this course is for students to:

- Be introduced to critical approaches to cultural identity and cultural production in contemporary literary theory
- Be introduced to recent critical debates about what it can be like to be a writer or cultural producer in multicultural society
- Learn approaches for applying theory to readings of literary and cultural texts
- Practice and develop academic research, communication and writing skills

Texts:

All required texts will be available for free on Ares or Brightspace.

Evaluation:

General criteria that influence grading: *All work completed for this course will receive a numerical grade that corresponds to the guidelines set out by the Faculty of Arts:*

90-100 – A+; 85-89 – A; 80-84 – A-; 77-79 – B+; 73-76 – B; 70-72 – B-; 67-69 – C+; 63-66 – C;
60-62 – C-; 57-59 – D+; 53-56 – D; 50-52 – D-; Below 50 – F

All term work will be subject to the following general evaluation criteria:

Each student is encouraged to genuinely engage with course material by expressing clear ideas about assigned readings, lecture material and class discussions.

Furthermore, it is paramount for students to display a genuine attempt at:

- (a) developing writing and comprehension skills
- (b) genuine, critical engagement with course material

Aside from the discussion posts and replies, all written assignments designated under “Term Work” will be subject to the following evaluative criteria in addition to any particular criteria stated in each assignment’s outline:

- 1) Written assignments are to be presented in MLA citation style and format. All references must be cited parenthetically in your prose. Written assignments should be formatted following MLA style (typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman Font, numbered pages, identification info at top left-hand corner of page one). Students are encouraged to consult the Eighth Edition of the *MLA Handbook*.
- 2) Where applicable, significant consideration will be paid to:
 - (a) accuracy in identifying texts, authors and context
 - (b) effective expression and communication of ideas through proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence and paragraph structure

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Term Work:

- **Reading Response, 15% of final grade:**

Students will write a reading response based on a text and topic assigned by the instructor. The assignment instructions will be provided in advance of the due date.

- **Discussion Forum and Learning Activities Participation, 25% of the final grade**

- **Quiz, 10% of the final grade**
- **Research Essay, 30% of the final grade:**

Students will write a formal research essay in response to one of a few writing prompts which the instructor will provide. Further explanation will be provided in the assignment instructions in advance of the due date.

- **Prompt Journal, 20% of the final grade (pass/fail grading):**

students will be given prompts to complete. These will be brief, engaging discussion activities and responses designed to get students thinking about our texts, topics, and larger writing assignments. Further explanation will be provided in the assignment instructions.

The Prompt Journal is designed to provide students with manageable exercises to be completed independently throughout the term. Written feedback will not be provided. To receive a passing grade, responses must be adequately completed. Otherwise, the journal will receive a lower and possibly a failing grade.